

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 06397 180852Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----013326 180854Z /10

O 180800Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3173
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 6397

EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PBOR, IS, EG, US, XF
SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS - EGYPTIAN COUNTER-PROPOSAL

REF: TEL AVIV 6269

1. WHEN I SAW BEGIN TO DELIVER THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER ON THE ARMS SALE DECISION LATE IN THE AFTERNOON MAY 17, WE GOT BRIEFLY ON TO THE SUBJECT OF THE STATE OF PLAY WITH RESPECT TO EGYPTIAN COUNTER-PROPOSALS. IT SOON BECAME APPARENT THAT THE MESSAGE I HAD ASKED EVRON TO RELAY TO BEGIN (REFTEL) HAD BECOME GARBLED IN TRANSMISSION OR ELSE BEGIN'S COMPREHENSION OF IT WAS SHAKY. HE HAD CONCLUDED THAT THE EGYPTIANS HAD TOLD US THAT THERE WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT BE ANY COUNTER-PROPOSAL FORTH-COMING, CONTRARY TO WHAT SECRETARY VANCE HAD ASSURED HIM IN WASHINGTON. (TODAY'S ISRAELI PRESS HAS SEVERAL STORIES REFLECTING THIS MISUNDERSTANDING WHICH WERE CLEARLY BASED ON BRIEFINGS FOR THE CORRESPONDENTS.)

2. I SAID THAT THIS WAS NOT REPEAT NOT THE MESSAGE I HAD BEEN GIVEN TO CONVEY. I HAD MERELY WANTED
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BEGIN TO KNOW THAT THE EGYPTIANS HAD DECIDED TO REFLECT FURTHER ON THEIR DRAFT BEFORE GIVING TO US AND THAT HE SHOULD NOT EXPECT TO RECEIVE IT IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. I TOLD HIM THAT IT WAS NOT CORRECT TO ASSUME AT ALL THAT THE EGYPTIANS HAD NOW DECIDED NOT TO PUT FORWARD A COUNTER-PROPOSAL.

3. BEGIN WAS CLEARLY BOTH SURPRISED AND VERY PLEASED
AT THIS CLARIFICATION. HE HAD OBVIOUSLY BEEN MUCH
DEPRESSED AT THE THOUGHT THAT NO COUNTER-
PROPOSAL AT ALL WOULD BE FORTHCOMING.

4. I REMAIN CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT IT IS FAR BETTER NOT TO
HAVE ONE ON THE TABLE HERE BEFORE THIS SUNDAY'S
CABINET MEETING, WHICH PROMISES TO BE STORMY
IN ANY EVENT.
LEWIS

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, MILITARY SALES, BRIEFING MATERIALS, CAT-B
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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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